

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please add the following claims 43 to 46 and amend claims 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, and 42 as follows:

Claims 1 to 10. (canceled)

11. (withdrawn) A glass container, especially for medicinal applications, said glass container being made by a method comprising thermal processing of a hollow glass body, wherein an overpressure is provided in an interior of said hollow glass body during said thermal processing.

12. (withdrawn) The glass container as defined in claim 11, wherein said hollow glass body is a glass tube (2).

13. (withdrawn) The glass container as defined in claim 11, having an alkali release from an inner surface thereof of at most 70 percent of an alkali release from an inner surface of another container made by said method comprising said thermal processing except that said overpressure was not provided.

14. (withdrawn) A glass container, especially for medicinal applications, said glass container being made by a method comprising the steps of:

a) thermally cutting a glass tube to length;

b) thermally opening a bottom formed on the glass tube during the cutting to length; and

c) at the same time as the thermally opening of step b), providing an overpressure in an interior of said glass tube.

15. (withdrawn) The glass container as defined in claim 11, having an alkali release from an inner surface thereof of at most 70 percent of an alkali release from an inner surface of another container made by said method comprising said thermal processing except that said overpressure was not provided.

16. (withdrawn) A glass container, especially for medicinal applications, said glass container having a sodium oxide release from an interior surface thereof of at most about 2.0 mg/l of sodium oxide.

Claims 17 to 31. (canceled)

32. (currently amended) A method of making a small glass container, said method comprising the steps of:

a) clamping a hollow glass tube with an open upper end and an inner surface in a vertical orientation, said hollow glass tube having an alkali release ~~releasing at least one alkali compound~~ during thermal processing of the hollow glass tube;

b) thermally cutting said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a) to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and a ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a);

c) thermally opening said ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube formed in step b) by heating said ~~closed-bottom~~; and

d) partially closing ~~said hollow glass tube at said open upper end~~ of said hollow glass tube with [[by]] a stopper provided with a through-going opening, wherein said through-going opening is dimensioned so that an overpressure is produced by constricting a gas flow path through said open upper end during said thermal processing, but so that while keeping said open upper end is kept sufficiently open so that an excessive overpressure that would otherwise damage the glass tube is not produced, said thermal processing including said thermally cutting to length and said thermally opening said bottom;

whereby contamination of said inner surface by said ~~at least one alkali release compound~~ during said thermal processing is at least reduced.

33. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 32, wherein said ~~at least one alkali compound evaporates~~ alkali release from said inner surface during said thermal processing and said thermal processing takes place by heating with flames and/or with jet flames.

34. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 32, further comprising forming a container mouth at said bottom of said hollow glass tube and subsequently melting through said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation at a position corresponding to a height of said small glass container in order to form said small glass container.

35. (previously presented) The method as defined in claim 32, wherein said small glass container is a bottle or an ampoule.

36. (currently amended) A method of making a small glass container, said method comprising the steps of:

a) clamping a hollow glass tube with an open upper end and an inner surface in a vertical orientation, said hollow glass tube having an alkali release ~~releasing at least one alkali compound~~ during thermal processing of the hollow glass tube;

b) thermally cutting said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a) to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and a ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a);

c) thermally opening said ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube formed in step b) by heating said ~~closed-bottom~~; and

d) blowing gas into the hollow glass tube through said open upper end of said hollow glass tube and through the hollow glass tube so that an overpressure

is produced during said thermal processing of said hollow glass tube, said thermal processing including said thermally opening said bottom and said thermally cutting to length;

so that contamination of said inner surface of said hollow glass tube by said alkali release during thermal processing ~~with said at least one alkali compound~~ is at least reduced.

37. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 36, wherein said ~~at least one alkali~~ release compound ~~evaporates~~ during said thermal processing and said thermal processing takes place by heating with flames and/or with jet flames.

38. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 36, further comprising forming a container mouth at said bottom of said hollow glass tube and subsequently melting through said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation at a position corresponding to a height of said small glass container in order to form said small glass container.

39. (previously presented) The method as defined in claim 36, wherein said small glass container is a bottle or an ampoule.

40. (currently amended) A method of at least reducing contamination of an inner surface of a hollow glass tube by an alkali release ~~deposition of at least one alkali compound~~ during thermal processing, said hollow glass tube having an open

upper end and an inner surface, said method comprising the steps of:

a) clamping said hollow glass tube with said open upper end and said inner surface in a vertical orientation, said hollow glass tube having an alkali release ~~releasing said at least one alkali compound from said inner surface~~ during said thermal processing of said hollow glass tube; and

b) partially closing said ~~hollow glass tube at said open upper end~~ of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a) with ~~[[by]]~~ a stopper provided with a through-going opening, wherein said through-going opening is dimensioned so that an overpressure is produced by constricting a gas flow path through said open upper end during said thermal processing, but so that ~~while keeping said open upper end~~ is kept sufficiently open so that an excessive overpressure that would otherwise damage the glass tube is not produced, said thermal processing including said thermally cutting to length and said thermally opening said bottom;

whereby said contamination of said inner surface of said hollow glass tube by said alkali release ~~by deposition of said at least one alkali compound during~~ said thermal processing is at least reduced because of said overpressure produced in said hollow glass tube.

41. (currently amended) The method as defined in claim 40, further comprising thermally cutting said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and ~~a closed bottom of said~~

hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation and then thermally opening said ~~closed~~ bottom of said hollow glass tube by heating said ~~closed~~ bottom.

42. (currently amended) A method of at least reducing contamination of an inner surface of a hollow glass tube by ~~at least one alkali compound~~ alkali compounds evaporating during thermal processing, said hollow glass tube having an open upper end and an inner surface, said method comprising the steps of:

a) clamping said hollow glass tube with said open upper end and said inner surface in a vertical orientation, said hollow glass tube having an alkali release ~~releasing said at least one alkali compound from said inner surface~~ during said thermal processing of said hollow glass tube;

b) thermally cutting said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a) to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and a ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step a);

c) thermally opening said ~~closed-bottom~~ of said hollow glass tube formed in step b) by heating said ~~closed-bottom~~; and

d) producing an overpressure in said hollow glass tube by blowing gas into the hollow glass tube through said open upper end of said hollow glass tube and through said hollow glass tube during said thermal processing of said hollow glass tube, said thermal processing including said thermally opening said bottom and said thermally cutting to length;

so that contamination of said inner surface of said hollow glass tube by
said alkali release during thermal processing ~~with said at least one alkali~~
compound is at least reduced because of the overpressure produced in said
hollow glass tube during said thermal processing.

43. (new) A method of making a small glass container, said method comprising
the steps of:

a) providing a glass tube with an open upper end and an inner surface,
said glass tube consisting of glass with a composition, in percent by weight on an
oxide basis, of SiO₂, 75; B₂O₃, 10.5; Al₂O₃, 5; Na₂O, 7; CaO, 1.5; and BaO, << 1;

b) clamping said glass tube with said open upper end and said inner
surface in a vertical orientation;

c) thermally cutting said glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in
step b) to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and a bottom of said
glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step b);

d) thermally opening said bottom of said glass tube formed in step c) by
heating said bottom; and

e) partially closing said open upper end of said glass tube with a stopper
provided with a through-going opening, wherein said through-going opening is
dimensioned so that an overpressure is produced by constricting a gas flow path
through said open upper end during thermal processing of said glass tube in
which sodium borate evaporates and deposits on said inner surface, but so that
said open upper end is kept sufficiently open so that an excessive overpressure

that would otherwise damage the glass tube is not produced, said thermal processing including said thermally opening of said bottom and said thermally cutting to length;

whereby contamination of said inner surface by said sodium borate deposited on said inner surface during thermal processing is at least reduced.

44. (new) The method as defined in claim 43, further comprising forming a container mouth at said bottom of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation and subsequently melting through said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation at a position corresponding to a height of said small glass container in order to form said small glass container.

45. (new) A method of making a small glass container, said method comprising the steps of:

a) providing a glass tube with an open upper end and an inner surface, said glass tube consisting of glass with a glass composition, in percent by weight on an oxide basis, of SiO₂, 75; B₂O₃, 10.5; Al₂O₃, 5; Na₂O, 7; CaO, 1.5; and BaO, << 1;

b) clamping said glass tube with said open upper end and said inner surface in a vertical orientation;

c) thermally cutting said glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation in step b) to length, thereby forming a tube piece for discard and a bottom of said glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation;

d) thermally opening said bottom of said glass tube formed in step c) by heating said bottom; and

e) blowing gas into said glass tube through said open upper end and through said glass tube and through said glass tube so that an overpressure is produced during thermal processing of said glass tube in which sodium borate evaporates and deposits on said inner surface during said thermal processing, said thermal processing including said thermally opening said bottom and said thermally cutting to length;

whereby contamination of said inner surface of said hollow glass tube by depositing of said sodium borate on said inner surface is at least reduced.

46. (new) The method as defined in claim 45, further comprising forming a container mouth at said bottom of said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation and subsequently melting through said hollow glass tube clamped in said vertical orientation at a position corresponding to a height of said small glass container in order to form said small glass container.